



Quality And Safety  
Achievement Recognition

# QASAR

Award Program and  
Nomination Guidelines

Administered by the  
Office of Safety and Mission Assurance  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Washington, DC 20546-0001

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# FOREWORD

Working on the cutting edge of aeronautics and space research and technology, working in the harsh environment of space, doing the things that have never been done—NASA's mission is inherently risky. Safety and quality must be all-encompassing drivers, understood and applied in every step of every program, project, and operation at every level of the organization. There is simply no quality or safety compromise in human flight or high-cost spacecraft.



Bryan O'Connor

NASA's goals are ambitious. To achieve the results we strive toward, we must provide top-quality products and services, and management-centered safety processes in the most economical way practicable. Achieving quality and safety is not simple. It takes top management commitment, the right information and tools, along with dedication, discipline, and the willingness to examine and

analyze work processes. It takes commitment to follow through and implement improvements.

The QASAR Award recognizes those individuals who have stepped up to the challenge and displayed exemplary performance in contributing to quality products and services and a safe environment and processes for NASA. I encourage you to review these criteria and participate in this award program to recognize exemplary performance in support of NASA.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bryan O'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bryan O'Connor

Chief Safety and Mission Assurance Officer

# I. WHAT IS QASAR?

**Q**ASAR stands for Quality And Safety Achievement Recognition. The QASAR Award recognizes NASA, other Government, and prime/subcontractor individuals for significant quality improvements to products or services for NASA, or safety initiatives within products, programs, processes, the environment, or management activities. NASA Headquarters and each of the Centers have local QASAR Award programs; annually the “Best of the Best” in each award category is selected at the Agency level. The Administrator recognizes the four winners at the Continual Improvement and Reinvention Conference. The QASAR Award is given only to individuals; team accomplishments must be recognized through other venues, such as Headquarters or Center award programs.

## II. PURPOSE

**T**he QASAR Award Program promotes safety, quality, and continuous improvement throughout NASA. The award recognizes specific Government and contractor employees at NASA Headquarters and the Centers who have displayed or exhibited exemplary performance in contributing to the quality and/or safety of products, services, processes, management programs and activities, or the working environment.

## III. QASAR AWARD CATEGORIES

- 1** Most significant safety or mission assurance (SMA) contribution from within the NASA SMA organization.
- 2** Most significant safety or quality improvement, service improvement, or initiative from a NASA employee external to the SMA organization.
- 3** Most significant safety or quality product improvement, service improvement, or initiative from a Government (non-NASA) employee.
- 4** Most significant safety or quality product improvement, service improvement, or initiative from a NASA prime or subcontractor employee.

## IV. SELECTION PROCESS

- Depending upon local policies, the NASA Headquarters and Center SMA offices evaluate nominees and select local recipients on a monthly, quarterly, semiannual, or annual basis.
- Annually, a QASAR Award Board, composed of SMA Directors, will select four **individuals**, one in each category, to receive the Agency QASAR “Best of the Best” awards. Each NASA Center and Headquarters may submit one nomination in each category for consideration in the “Best of the Best” awards.
- With respect to this award process, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory is considered a NASA Center.
- The QASAR Award period runs from calendar year to calendar year. Nominations for the Agency “Best of the Best” awards for calendar year 2004 are due to the Office of Safety and Mission Assurance no later than January 14, 2005. See Section IX.

## V. QASAR AWARD CRITERIA

To be eligible to receive a QASAR Award, an individual must accomplish at least one of the following:

- Identify or implement significant quality or safety improvements to NASA products, services, or processes.
- Institute continuous quality or safety improvement through NASA and/or contractor action teams.
- Identify potential quality or safety problems and recommend corrective action to preclude mishaps or major system impacts.
- Advance the quality and safety profession through other significant accomplishments.

## VI. QASAR SUPPLEMENTAL CRITERIA ELEMENTS

The following items may be considered within the criteria when determining an individual's eligibility for the QASAR Award:

- Was an operational hazard identified that, if not corrected, could cause injury to personnel and/or damage to ground support equipment or flightware?
- Was exceptional performance displayed, e.g., did the individual define a problem that was undetected and/or exert extraordinary management or floor-level effort that resulted in corrective action?
- Were recommendations made that significantly improved product or service quality or safety, safety methods, safety procedures, and/or resulted in significant resource savings? Or did the process cost more and result in better reliability and safety?
- Was outstanding performance shown in fostering NASA/contractor teamwork and partnership for quality or safety?
- Was outstanding leadership displayed in contributing actively to the safety and mission success goals of NASA Headquarters and/or the Center and its safety programs?
- Has the process resulted in advancing one or more of the elements of the Agency Safety Initiative?
- Has the individual distinguished him- or herself in the quality or safety area by any of the following:
  - Teaching quality or safety courses in colleges/universities,
  - Serving on technical advisory committees or other significant outreach activities, or
  - Making a significant contribution to NASA's body of knowledge in quality and/or safety principles?

## VII. NOMINATIONS

Any NASA or NASA contractor employee may nominate an eligible **individual** to receive a QASAR Award. The award nomination form cannot exceed one page in length. A sample form is provided in Appendix A. QASAR Award nominations should be submitted to the cognizant Headquarters or Center QASAR representative (listed on page 8) or as Center policy designates.

The nomination form also can be retrieved in Microsoft Word at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/qasar>

When nominating an individual for a QASAR “Best of the Best” Award, assure that the nomination includes the category, individual’s name, organization, justification, and citation. The signatures of the Center SMA Director and Center Director are mandatory.

## VIII. NOMINATION JUSTIFICATION

Nominations should indicate how the individual impacted the Agency or mission he or she was supporting. If appropriate, metrics (such as those listed below) that support the achievement also should be included:

- Specific examples of improved safety,
- Specific examples of improved quality or improved reliability,
- Demonstrated cost savings,
- Improved time management,
- How product or service was improved,
- How productivity was increased,
- Scope and duration of benefit, and
- Level of customer satisfaction.



## IX. QASAR AWARD “BEST OF THE BEST”

Each year the “Best of the Best” of the year’s local QASAR Award recipients are selected for Agency recognition. Each Center and Headquarters may submit *one nomination in each category* for consideration in the “Best of the Best” awards. The Center SMA Director and the Center Director must sign nominations from the Centers. Nominations from the Headquarters program offices and functional offices must be signed by the nominating Associate/Assistant Administrator. The QASAR Award Board will select one recipient in each category.

The QASAR “Best of the Best” Award plaques will be presented by the Administrator at the 19th NASA Continual Improvement and Reinvention Conference.

In addition to the plaque, NASA civil servant QASAR Award recipients will receive a substantial cash award.

## X. QASAR AWARD BOARD

The Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance chairs the QASAR Award Board. The Board consists of the nine Center SMA Directors and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory’s SMA Director. It convenes annually to select the QASAR Award “Best of the Best” recipients, usually during the first quarter of the calendar year.

# XI. NASA QASAR REPRESENTATIVES

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# APPENDIX A

## QASAR AWARD NOMINATION FORM

### QASAR CATEGORY

- ☐ NASA Safety and Mission Assurance (SMA) organization employees
- ☐ NASA (outside SMA organization)
- ☐ Government (outside NASA)
- ☐ NASA prime or subcontractor

### NOMINEE \_\_\_\_\_

(First, MI, Last)

### ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

(NASA or contractor organization)

### JUSTIFICATION

(Describe the specific events/actions that warrant the nomination)

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### CITATION

(Summary of justification to be inscribed on Award)

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### SIGNATURE/DATE \_\_\_\_\_

(Center SMA Director or the Associate/Assistant Administrator at HQ)

### CENTER OR HQ OFFICE \_\_\_\_\_

